

Hearing Conservation Program

Lesson Guide #2



- # OBJECTIVES:
- Upon completion of this topic, you will be able to:
- Identify the Navy's hearing conservation program.
 - Define noise hazards and describe how they are identified.
 - Describe the various types of hearing protection used by the Navy.
 - Describe hearing test requirements.

Background

- Hearing Loss
 - Exposure to high levels of continuous noise or sudden, impact noise can cause permanent hearing loss.
 - Hearing loss is preventable.
 - The Navy's program is designed to “*conserve*” hearing.

NAVY Hearing Conservation Program



*The goal of the
Navy's hearing
conservation
program:
Prevention through
Education &*

Goals (continued) :

- Prevent occupational hearing loss and ensure auditory fitness for duty in the military and civilian workforce.
- Prevent noise exposure that has been recognized as an occupational hazard related to certain trades or operations.
- Preventing hearing loss has been and continues to be a source of concern within the Navy.

Program Elements

- Work environments shall be surveyed to identify potentially hazardous noise levels and personnel at risk.
- Environments that contain or equipment that produces potentially hazardous noise shall be modified to reduce the noise level to acceptable levels, if feasible.

Program Elements (continued) :



- Periodic hearing testing shall be conducted to monitor the effectiveness of the Hearing Conservation Program.
- Education is vital to the overall success of a Hearing Conservation Program.

The Navy's Responsibilities

- BUMED centrally manages the Hearing Conservation Program.
- Echelon 2 Headquarters shall provide technical assistance and engineering guidance to commands.
- CNET shall incorporate hearing conservation and engineering control guidance into all appropriate training curriculum.

The Navy's Responsibilities

- Commanding Officers Shall Ensure :
 - **All Navy areas, work sites and equipment under their cognizance identified as noise hazardous are labeled.**
 - **A hearing monitoring program and a roster maintained on personnel placed in the program is instituted.**
 - **Hazardous noise levels are eliminated or reduced through the use of engineering controls.**
 - **Personal hearing protective devices are provided.**

The Navy's Responsibilities

- Commanding Officer's Shall Ensure:
 - All military and civilian personnel whose duties entail exposure to potentially hazardous noise, receive instruction regarding:
 - the Command Hearing Conservation Program.
 - The undesirable effects of noise.
 - The necessity of periodic hearing testing.
 - Off-duty practices which will aid in protecting hearing

The Navy's Responsibilities

- Commanding Officers Shall Ensure:
 - All Military and Civilian personnel receive instruction regarding
 - **The individual's responsibility in protecting their hearing.**
 - **How hearing loss affects employability / retention, job performance and career progression.**

The Bottom Line



- Leadership by example is the key to ensuring that personnel utilize hearing protection devices.

Permissible Exposure Limits (PEL's)

84 decibels on the “A” weighted
network Or 84 dBA

“A” weighted means the frequencies and sound levels measured are those experienced by humans, so the meter “hears” similar to the way your ears hear.

PEL's (*continued*)



- The limit for impact noise is 140 dB.
- When exposures are likely to exceed 84 dBA, personnel shall be included in the Navy's Hearing Conservation Program

Noise Measurement

- Noise measurements are taken by an industrial hygienist, safety personnel, workplace monitors, or industrial hygiene technicians.
- Work environments with noise levels greater than 84 dBA (*continuous or intermittent*), or 140 dB peak sound pressure level for impact are analyzed / resurveyed within 30 days of any changes.

Noise Measurement

(continued)

- Measurements taken are conducted with a microphone at a height equal to the height / location of the workers ear during normal working conditions.
- Records of noise measurements are kept for a period of 50 years.
- The measurements are taken using a sound level meter and personal dosimeters.

Exposure Assessment

- PEL criteria shall be used to determine the degree of compliance with applicable standards.
- The designation of an area as a hazardous noise area is made by an industrial hygienist.

Labeling of Hazardous Noise Areas & Equipment

- NAVMED 6260/2, Hazardous Noise Warning Decal
- NAVMED 6260/2A, Hazardous Noise Labels are both approved labels / decals.
- Posting of entire building is not necessary unless all areas are designated hazardous noise areas.
- Military unique equipment is excluded.

Hearing Tests



- All military shall receive a “*reference*” audiogram.
- All civilians working in designated hazardous noise areas shall receive a reference audiogram.

Personal Protective Hearing Devices

- Personal protective hearing devices shall be worn when working or entering in an area where operations generate noise levels of:
 - Greater than 84 dBA
 - 140 peak sound pressure level or greater.
 - **Double protection is required in areas where levels exceed 104dB.**
 - **All** personnel exposed to gunfire.

Recordkeeping

- Hearing tests shall be recorded and be a permanent part of an employee's health record; personal noise dosimetry data must also be placed into the health record.
- All hearing tests shall be recorded on a DD 2215, Reference Audiogram or DD 2216, Hearing Conservation Data, as appropriate.
- A current roster of all the personnel in a hearing conservation program

Noise Abatement



- Existing Hazards
 - Engineering design
 - Damping the noise
 - Acoustical enclosures
 - Isolation
 - Substitution
 - Administrative controls (***work schedules***)

Noise Abatement

- Future designs
 - Systems Engineering
 - Improved installation methods

Review and Summary



*Don't let the sound
pirate
slowly steal your*

- Hazardous noise levels are a fact of life in industrial areas. The Navy program was developed to identify these noisy areas, post warnings, provide protective equipment, and routinely test our worker's hearing.